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21 January 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. HELMS

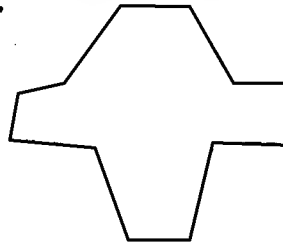
SUBJECT: Aircraft Survey Program

We have just received this Aircraft Survey Program paper from Frank.

Copies have been distributed to General Cushman and Carl Duckett.

Initial examination would allow me to believe that Dr. David, White House Scientific Advisor, is no  and some of his statements on aircraft capability, cost factors and political risks may contain elements of stargazing and fortune telling.

Since there is allusion to DOD as principal agent you may wish to advise Duckett to what extent you want him to staff this out.



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21 January 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR THE 40 COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: Aircraft Survey Program

Attached are copies of an exchange of correspondence between Dr. Kissinger and Dr. Edward E. David, Jr. regarding the proposed use of U-2C or RB57F aircraft for international earth survey missions.

Dr. Kissinger wishes to discuss in the 40 Committee the implications involved in the utilization of known reconnaissance aircraft in an international earth resources survey program as well as any effect this might have on classified intelligence operations.

By way of background, this question arises because of President Nixon's offer, in his UN speech of September 1969, to share internationally the benefits of our earth resources satellite program. Since the satellite program will not materialize (to a degree that would be internationally significant) until 1975, it was decided by an informal Executive Office working group to look into the possibility of an interim aircraft survey program in support of the President's initiative.

The essential program elements of an aircraft survey program would be roughly these:

- Use of U-2C or RB57F aircraft operated by USAF crews under the aegis of a lead agency such as NASA or Interior. (Private industry operating civil aircraft on a contract basis is another option.)
- Flight operations and derived earth survey data would be completely unclassified.
- Pilot operations in the U.S. to prove out the concept.
- Development of analytical facilities to process and evaluate data.
- International canvassing to develop a "demand curve" for survey services in foreign areas.

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Some questions which should be considered in connection with this proposal are as follows:

- Would an unclassified aircraft survey program have an adverse effect on classified intelligence operations?
- What international problems would arise from cross-border photography if the adjacent countries have not developed a mutually agreed program?
- What limitations, if any, can be placed upon access to survey data? Completely open? Available to client-country only?
- Will it be possible to selectively de-classify satellite photography to serve as a supporting data base for an aircraft survey program?
- What are the implications and advisability of utilizing in this program the U-2, world-renowned as a "spy plane"?

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Attachments

Memo for Dr. David from HAK
dated January 8, 1971
Memo for HAK from Dr. David
dated Dec. 11, 1970 w/att

Distribution:

Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Packard
Mr. Johnson
Admiral Moorer
Mr. Helms